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Calcutta University and the
problem of unemployment

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CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY AND THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT

SHOULDERING THE DARK MAN'S BURDEN.

The imperialistic phrase about the white man's duty and "white man's burden" is naturally taken by his duskier brother as rather cant and even insolence, and very often it is both, but, after all, there is such a thing as "bearing one another's burdens," and there are differences between the characteristics and aptitudes of the different branches of the great human family, as well as between those of its different members, so we can help each other inter-racially as well as individually, *ex Oriente lex, ex Occidente lux*—law from the West and light from the East—and Pax Britannica, is a reality, after all, so that much-abused imperialistic phrase—abused in both senses of the word—need not be taken quite cynically.

But, whatever good the fairer races may have done their darker brethren in the past, the time has clearly come now for the East to help the West, by giving it light and a lead once more.

The West with its brainy materialism, but lack of vision and higher imagination, has evolved an economic system that has degenerated into an appalling muddle, with very evil consequences to the masses of the people, and like a sick man carrying his infection, it is taking its tainted system to other countries.

Fortunately India has not been entirely blinded by the glamour of Western progress, and has summed up modern industrialism as a system under which the workers are deprived of the things that are really good, natural and wholesome, and reduced to a state of wage-slavery, the fruits

of which are moral and physical deterioration, together with utter insecurity of a living, all to enable some people to get rich quickly; the immense inequalities created spreading dissatisfaction and envy among all classes, and resulting in widespread corruption. India has stamped this civilisation, as "satanic," and her revolt against it, and specially against a Government suspected to be the handmaid of capitalism, will take its place among the remarkable moral and religious revivalist movements of the world.

Now when this great popular movement was at its height, Calcutta University issued and distributed to colleges and to the "recognised" schools of Bengal, and issued also for sale to the public, printed lectures,¹ showing that, if India would concentrate on the constructive side of her non-co-operation idea, she would place herself on the road of sure and rapid progress, and not only that, but she might give an important lead to the whole world, showing all how to escape the great evils that accompany modern civilisation, and thus have her very crushing but very noble revenge on the West and its arrogance.

The practical hopefulness and utility of the suggestions made in these prints won them approval even from people who took no part in the political movement. Sir Dinshaw Wacha, the eminent practical economist, and entirely constructive statesman, looking at these publications simply from the constructive point of view, wrote that "Calcutta University, as befits the highest seat of learning in the land, has taken a lead that will make the whole horizon glow with light later on;" and this view was endorsed very strongly by leading economists to whom these publications were sent.

The appeal was addressed specially by leading university of India to the educated people of the country, calling upon them to get to work and put this *jijitsu* into practice, without

¹ "Self-Government and the Bread Problem." Calcutta University, Rs. 1-4-0 & 1-14-0.

waiting for the masses. The masses, who always look passionately at one side of a question, clamour loudly for impossible steps and unattainable ideals, till they settle down finally, disappointed and discouraged, to accept things fatalistically as they are. The Calcutta University publications insisted that if the educated people would do their duty, that need not occur in this instance.

First they insist, that, to understand the situation correctly, we want accurate and complete information, which those heated in the strife of partisanship cannot give; these publications and appeals emphasise that never did the words "the truth will make you free" apply more strongly than they do to India now, and to the world.

We have to recognise frankly that we cannot put the clock back, and bring people back to idyllic ideas and tastes. The non-co-operation movement swept India with such a wave of enthusiasm as has rarely swept any country before, the "weaver-farmer," and the "spinner-farmer" were extolled to the skies, but people did not go "back to the land," and the immense wave came and went without leaving us one single colony of back-to-the landers that is of sufficient importance to be generally known. It is no good telling mankind that it must not apply intelligence to its methods of production, and to improving in its ways of working. It is in the very nature of man to strive to progress, to use in every direction the intelligence he has been gifted with, and more than anything else he will use it to improve his ways of doing his daily work.

As clearly as reformers of the East have found that it is impossible, by appealing to people, to make them abhor material progress, so clearly have those of the West found that it is impossible to put the clock forward a century, and, by appealing to people, to induce them to raise themselves at a bound on to a higher moral and intellectual plane; to substitute the co-operative state, in which "people will work

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together for the common good" for the present struggle for personal advancement and success.

What we have to do is to study how we can remove our great social ills taking man and his systems as we find them.

Popular leaders denounce machine-production, saying that it leads to the enslavement of the masses to the owners of the machines, condemning them to drudging toil and degrading wage-slavery, instead of the wholesome and happy labour of free men. The socialist speaks of capitalism as a system under which the crafty and the greedy obtain possession of the means of production and distribution and make others work for them on their own terms.

Evidently, however, under good social conditions, labour-saving machinery ought to save us drudgery, not give it to us, and members of the community—like capitalists—establish good machinery, and allowing people to work with it for wages if they find it to their advantage to do so, ought to be benefactors.

The good social conditions that are required for that are after all, very simple.

It is clear that if a rural community suddenly became inventive, and evolved machinery with the help of which people would produce the clothes they wanted by five days' average labour a year, instead of twenty days', and the implements by ten days' labour instead of fifty, and their agricultural work with half the amount of toil, the result would be, normally, that they would have a considerable amount of leisure.

As regards capitalism, it is evident that if the work done by machinery could be much more efficiently done in large organisations, people establishing such organisations, in which workers would have the option of working if they wanted to, would do good to the community, even if the capitalists took an undue share of the advantage. They would have to offer the workers more for their labour than they

would earn in their own workshops or, normally, they would not work for them.

Of course it is true that the work done by improved methods might sometimes be of less value from certain points of view than primitive toil. As, however, the labour-saving-machinery, would set people free to use much of their time as they wished, instead of being compelled to spend it all producing necessities, it should be a gain, given education to make them use their leisure well. Progress, in fact, may be defined as the conquest of leisure by machinery, and improved methods,—combined with education and culture to make people use the leisure profitably. To talk about the social danger of machinery and the conquest of leisure, because it may be used badly, is reactionary in the extreme; it is, in fact, to deny the possibility of human progress.

But nothing in the world could be stranger, but at the same time simpler, when we come to examine it, than the way in which machine-production and capitalism, under the conditions that have now arisen, produce abnormal effects; the circumstances are so fantastically paradoxical, however, that they leave one somewhat bewildered.

When the whole system becomes capitalistic, we have, on the one hand, a capitalist class owning all the means of production, and on the other hand a proletariat owning nothing, with no second string to its bow, no land and workshops of its own to get a livelihood by. Under these conditions workers are driven to work the whole day in factories. Then machine production becomes a cruel drudgery. The factory worker then gets the evil side of it without the good, the unimproving work, without the leisure to use for self-improvement. Under these conditions, indeed, labour-saving machinery may result in cruel overwork, and too often actually does so. When there are a number of people depending upon the capitalist for their daily bread, and labour-saving machinery has reduced the number of workers required, there is keen competition for

work, and people accept employment on hard terms. Then what happens, of course, is that the "leisure" won for the community by labour-saving machinery is thrust upon some individuals in the form of unemployment! In a way that is just as simple, though just as fantastically paradoxical, wealth-producing power results, under these conditions in poverty. Driven by competition, people give an amount of labour and demand a "real wage" that do not correspond correctly with the total power to supply.

Evidently the labour the worker gives and the produce he takes for it, should be adjusted to each other. Under conditions in which both are fixed in the haphazard of competition, there are not and there cannot always be enough work for all and insecurity thus accompanies "industrial progress."

The whole occurs through the workers not having a second string to their bow, as the community we have just given as an example would have. It was particularly insisted in the Calcutta University publications that this state of affairs is not good for the capitalists as a class, the question of remedying it therefore is not a class-question.

Now on the straight road to her own emancipation, and to the solution of her problems, India could inaugurate a new departure that promises to be the best possible lever we could have to compel nations to reforms in these matters; and that is what the Calcutta University publications deal with particularly.

The co-operators, who, for the last century have been organising so successfully that co-operation has become about the most important social movement of our day, have been all along telling us that none of the fundamentally evil features of our social system would be able to continue if the workers would organise themselves so as to have some degree of economic independence; because then they would be in a position to refuse to work for any system—or of course government—that maintained features that were fundamentally

bad. The co-operators, thus, were constructive "non-co-operators"; but, of course, highly constructive.

Hitherto, however, all attempts to reform our social system in that simple way have failed.

Owing to the great complexity of modern life, and modern methods of production, it is very difficult indeed for people to be economically independent; and we have come to realise now that the co-operators have set out on a very long journey and seem to have lost themselves on the way, and even to have lost sight of their goal.

Numerous attempts were made at first to go straight to the goal, to establish commonwealths in which people would produce the more ordinary necessities of life for themselves, and become thus practically independent; the advocates of this plan argued, and no doubt correctly, that if a few succeeded, more and more would join, making the work easier and easier, because the larger an organisation of that kind, the better it can subdivide labour, and the better methods it can use; they hoped, thus, to have soon a powerful organisation that would be able to compel our social system to put itself in order,—failing which it would get no good workers. They were not successful, however, owing to lack of the discipline, without which no industrial organisation can succeed. For discipline, it is necessary to have workers who depend on their wage for their living, whereas the co-operative commonwealths had to call for self-sacrificing volunteers, whom they could not pay adequately, and over whom, therefore, they had no proper control. They got, moreover, as workers, the type of people who are of all, the least amenable to discipline.

Now to cut a long story short, what the Calcutta University publications insist on, is that, if those who are working for the emancipation of India would turn their entire energies to constructive work, there is every reason to hope that they would be able to do in India, where the conditions are

infinitely more suitable, what the co-operators failed to do in the West, and in that manner put their country on the way to emancipation, solve her most urgent problems specially those of education and unemployment, and give a practical example that would be of absolutely priceless value to the whole world at the present day.

These publications, however, urge that most hopeful way to begin is by an application of the co-operative colony idea to education, which would be a revival in a modernised form of the old Indian plan of the *gurukula*, which was an educational "co-operative colony," managed by the *guru*.

Progress has given us extraordinary facilities for such a revival of the old *gurukula* idea, and now that we all feel the need of a more practical education system, this seems to be the plan to adopt.

Two economic facts render this possible. The first of these is that modern industrial and agricultural methods enable us to make very great use of the labour of boys, in a suitable organisation: the other, which is often overlooked, though it is of equal importance, is that, owing to our complicated trade methods, there is often a very great difference between the price at which things can be produced in a good organisation, and that at which they are retailed to the consumer.

Owing to these combined facts, we might now start this modern application of the *gurukula* idea in very simple ways, and hope to see it extend rapidly, and become an enormous organisation, having the most profound and far-reaching effects on every Indian question and giving abundant employment for middle-class men.

A very simple plan suggested for a start, is to take town school boys daily, or several times a week, to schools outside the towns, in which, whilst going on with their studies, they would be trained to cultivate the land, also trained in workshops if they wanted to learn industries. By virtue of the second named economic fact, they would earn appreciably by taking

produce to their homes, even before their labour had any value.

Now we have had some experience of these things, and some opportunity to know what can be done successfully at the start, and what cannot. We could insure success by having these *gurukulas* organised on the plan of groups of small holdings and small industries. We might have each small holding and workshop the private enterprise of the person in charge of it, who would manage it in his own way, and, whenever possible, with his own capital, conforming, however, to certain conditions of the educational organization. Among those conditions would be that he would give to boys working for him a certain amount of remuneration in kind, from the time they had sufficient experience to be of some use; and that from the beginning he would give them produce to take home, for the wholesale price, so that they would be able to earn the distributor's wage.

Now these "educational colonies," extending into the country districts, employing village lads using good modern methods, by which they would be able to produce as much in half a day as they would by working a whole day at home, promise to solve the problem of popular education together with that of unemployment among educated men.

The matter has been long and carefully considered in Calcutta University. A description of the scheme was appended to the Report of the Calcutta University Commission. (Vol. VII, p. 18) and widely circularised in every country for opinions. Sir Asutosh Mookerjee, at whose instance this was done, declared that "the result was entirely satisfactory; there were, in fact, only favourable comments." In every quarter the hope was expressed that India would give a practical example which might show all countries the way to great progress.

Looking at the question from another point of view that is also of the greatest national importance, sociologists

know now that, though adults may, under proper conditions, maintain their health in towns, children seem to suffer seriously in their development from the lack of pure country air. Nothing could be more hopeful from every point of view especially for modern urbanised nations than to take the town children to "educational colonies" outside the towns, where they would follow the programme briefly outlined above. It might be possible even to use the class-rooms for dormitories for *half* the children, so that they might go to the school one morning returning the next evening, and, in that manner, spend perhaps thirty-five hours out of the forty-eight in the country to their immense benefit, whilst receiving a practical training that would give them all their lives a second string to their bow, and an unfailing one.

It is important to emphasise that, owing to the economic strength such an organisation would have, the school years would, for every reason, be made longer under this plan, and the school hours shorter, and boys, on the whole, would have much better opportunities for good healthy games, not the reverse.

This simple plan offers a solution at once for many of the most pressing of our social questions.

People brought up in this way would be able, if ever they found themselves unemployed, to return to a similar organisation for adults, in which, by virtue of the same economic facts, they would be able to get maintenance, and a bonus after a certain period. By proper arrangements being made, a married man, even a man with a family, would be able to earn his bonus in quite a reasonable time, the wife and elder children helping. Having earned this bonus, with his knowledge of cultivation, and with his practical industrial training, he would always have a chance of making a living.

In this perfectly simple manner, industrial progress has opened up to us possibility of making unemployment a thing entirely of the past. The Calcutta University publications

give practical illustrations that make it evident that this solution is undoubtedly possible if the organisations are large enough, and suitable; and that in England and other countries, just as much as in India, this co-operative organisation of the young, would give the most hopeful foundation for co-operation to build upon, and promises to have very far-reaching social effects; the most eminent authorities on the subject are quoted in support of that view. Apart, however, from that, the educational colony" plan is in itself of extraordinary interest to Great Britain also.

In the first place, as regards solving the problem of unemployment, it would help simply and directly, by bringing up the young in a way that would fit them to be capable colonists. As regards the garden-city movement, which one may say is striking at the root of our modern social evils, it also will begin to do great things from the moment it begins to study the possibilities of starting thus with the children, the most easily removable element of the population. Educational colonies, could easily be made to develop into industrial and residential suburbs and would give great opportunities for planning on the garden city lines.

Now the question for the earnest enquirer is what examples we can actually point to, illustrating machine-production and capitalism working reasonably well, and what prospects there are of the good examples we have, being followed and becoming general if we pave the way to them by a suitable education system.

As a matter of fact, the workers appear to be at their best, morally, physically and economically where they combine industrial occupations with the cultivation of the land.

The reasons for this are very clear.

Earnest work is what gives man moral stamina. The work he does earnestly is that which is done for himself with the energy, application and intelligence with which a man works when it is for himself. The work that develops

him is that which demands of him that he shall use his judgment independently and his intelligence as well as his thews and senews; work on the land does that.

On the other hand, however, a man working separately and independently has to labour hard to get the necessities of life. Strenuous exertion is good, but incessant grinding toil is not, and may become brutalising. We can, therefore, very easily understand that the best conditions seem to be those under which the man works independently for a part of the day and in an efficient organisation for another part. Very obviously also it may be good in every way, for him to work part of the day in co-operation with his fellowmen to make the most efficient use of combined efforts.

The next question is why this system is not more general.

The first answer, of course, is that a very large proportion of the workers in Belgium cultivate land, and go daily to work in the factory. Belgium has, with great wisdom, rendered this possible by a railway system, in which, before the war, working men were conveyed up to about six and a half miles for one pice.

It is not done more generally, however, because at present the difficulty of getting sufficient land conveniently situated stands fatally in the way.

Workers will not take to the cultivation of the land as a second string to their bow unless they can have, quite near their dwellings, so much land that it will give them a certain economic independence, so that they will not be obliged to leave their home and their holding immediately if they lose their employment in the factory. They must also know that if they have to move to another place in search of new employment they will be able to get land there too. Without these conditions they will not learn the art of cultivation and will not use a plot well. Given proper conditions this plan, as Belgium illustrates, can solve our great problems. Slack times of the factory have no terror to the man who has

some land; even total unemployment does not leave him in poverty, if only he has a very small insurance and he has a second string to his bow.

The next question is whether the workers, if they could be given the opportunity, would work everywhere on this plan.

The answer is that for a variety of important reasons a very large class of food-stuffs can be produced much more economically, and at the same time are much better from a garden round the house than purchased from the shops. Many articles of food are utterly unsuitable for trade being bulky and in every way awkward to handle commercially and very perishable. This class of produce in fact forms a marked exception to the general law of subdivision of production, and should normally be produced by the worker for himself; so that, generally speaking the worker, if he has enough land, will for economic reasons want a short day in the factory to have time for the cultivation of his own plot; leading industrialists have now agreed that the system of short periods in the factory, in well organised shifts, is perfectly possible.

In connection with this question, however, there is one thing of the very greatest importance and hopefulness. We must begin with the young.

Men vary very much indeed. There are some who prefer to spend their whole day working in the factory, where they have not to think, but only to go on mechanically with the same task. But even in their case the land will be the means of economic and social salvation. Children at least take keenly to work on the land if given proper encouragement and instruction, and of course if not overworked, and thus given a distaste for it. As sociologists who have studied the subject know, there is nothing more remarkable than the atavism by which children take naturally and keenly to this primitive occupation of the race. A proper schools system therefore, is all that is wanted to insure that the children at least will cultivate the home plot. Then, to some extent, it will become

an excellent hobby and second string to the bow even of the parent who is a whole-day factory worker cares little for anything else.

Now let us turn to the practical aspect of this solution.

The garden city movement which has established itself in every country in the West has of late opened peoples' eyes to the fact that must be made universally possible for workers to have this second string to their bow which will remove the evils of our industrial system and give us the normal benefits of progress.

Railways have rendered it possible for us, as we might express it, to project the growth of cities to points at a distance from them where the land is still cheap, and where we could have town-planning on the garden-city principle, with the "agricultural belts" that are required.

With the travelling facilities we have now, we might compel people to establish factories a few miles from the towns, subsidising workmen's trains if necessary at first until garden cities grew up around the new factories, and we might also compel people to build workers' dwellings a few miles away, giving the same facilities until industries came to the new suburbs.

Given a suitable land system we might thus dissolve the present agglomerations of population. The cost of doing it would be nothing more than perhaps some expenditure on subsidising workmen's trains. The financial gain—apart entirely from any sociological considerations—would be enormous, as we should in that way turn millions of acres that have now only low value as rural land into gardens and accommodation land of enormously more value.

Owing to the colossal financial gain that would result, decentralisation might be carried on very rapidly—if it were preceded by land reform. It is impossible, however, under the land system in which the values of land created by the public are all owned by private individuals.

This brings us then to the real answer to the question why machine production and capitalism are giving bad results.

It is that *the West has advanced from the age of agriculture and handicrafts to the age of factories and towns with the land system of a primitive rural age, and this has put its entire economic and social system out of adjustment, with the terrible results we now witness.*

The conditions brought about by progress make the public the creator of land values, but we have still kept the private individuals as owners of those values when they are made. The result of this topsy turvedom, of the one party making the value of land, and the other owing it, has been to render impossible the proper planning of towns.

Town-planning is a process in which very great expenditure is incurred, sites are sacrificed, and the owners have to be compensated, but the result of the expenditure, and of the sacrifice of values at some places, is to create enormous values at others. Town-planning, therefore, is a money-making process, but of course absolutely impossible under a system in which land values are made by one party and owned when made by another! Under these abnormal conditions town planning can be carried out only to a trifling extent for the beautification of towns, but not on the scale that is required to make them suitable to modern economic requirements, and make our industrial system work healthily.

Looking at the actual facts, what we find, then, is that India has not to avoid machine-production, or even capitalism if only there are prospects of her having them under sane condition, and not the calamitously irrational ones into which Europe has fallen owing to industrial progress having gone much faster than political progress could move.

When we know the true facts, we find ourselves in presence of a situation of the most extraordinary interest.

We must look at this question from a world point of view, some country will have to give the lead with land reform and the rest will follow, but each has its contribution to make, and India's contribution may be of paramount importance in hastening matters for the "educational colony" would speed things up as nothing else could.

But now let us look at Great Britain which is confronted with the fact that owing to a crudely defective land system she has a disastrous amount of unemployment, and has her population crowded into towns where, despite all modern sanitation, there is an amount of physical deterioration that the Departmental Committee recently appointed to investigate the matter described as "appalling"; towns in which moreover people are in danger of being almost exterminated in war by air bombardment and long-distance bombardment; to which is added the danger of being starved by submarines cutting off the food supplies; for this state of affairs is fatal to the prosperity of home agriculture, as Great Britain knows only too well.

It is freely admitted that, of all the defects of our social system, the anomalies that arise in connection with private land ownership in advanced countries are the crudest. Indeed it is not possible for the imagination to conceive anything more absurd than the state of affairs which now exists, in which the value of the land is made by the public, and no longer by the individual, but the ownership of the values has not been correspondingly changed, so that we have now the topsy-turvy position of the values being made by one party and owned when they are made by another; improvements involving expenditure being consequently impossible.

But although people will admit all this, they will not always face the fact that this state of topsy-turvydom is responsible for our industrial progress being a failure. There are many selfish reasons, a kind of false pride, selfish fears of

changes, that keep people from looking at all the facts and owning the truth.

Such pride as Western nations still have in their great material progress, in their applications of science to practical affairs, and immense industrial enterprise, is all reduced to naught if it has to be admitted that it is through an act of supreme political ineptitude—the result of the selfish and short-sighted quarrels between the "haves" and the "have-nots"—that their whole progress has been made a failure from the point of view of human welfare. It is human after all to fail to take the trouble to understand all the facts in connection with a matter that, when thoroughly understood, leads one to complete humiliation.

In this connection the popular parties are doing the very worst thing possible. By clamouring loudly for measures of land reform that would be as unjust as the system they are designed to rectify, or demanding the nationalisation of the land which, for sentimental, but nevertheless strong reasons, is abhorrent to many people; they make land reform look a very difficult matter, and give people a welcome excuse for turning from it, as a thing that is not practically possible, evading the whole question.

That, in general terms, has been the position in the West hitherto.

Recent developments, however, have made it so obvious that the real faults of our land system could be removed without either land nationalisation or any attack whatever on vested interests, and at the same time have made it so clear that our misfit land system has become calamitous in its results, that people are beginning to realise now the need of taking up the land question in a non-party spirit, and with an entirely constructive object. Already more thoughtful organs of public opinion, even among those representing the propertied classes, have expressed approval of suggestions for constructive land reform on the lines simply of what is called

the national purchase of the "speculative value" of the land.

In a word, then, the conditions under which machine production and capitalism give bad results are not only absolutely abnormal, but they have become, under modern conditions, so calamitous in the case of more advanced countries, and specially in that of Great Britain, that it seems absolutely impossible that they should continue much longer.

We have now in the garden-city and other associations, great organised groups of people working hard for their removal, and, contemplating the condition of Europe to-day, one can but say that if there is a God in Heaven, and some sincerity and intelligence among men, we may hope that the propaganda that is being carried out for the reform of the hideous anomaly that makes our entire industrial system bad, will soon be successful.

It is hopeful in this connection that reform is quite as necessary from the point of view of prosperity—particularly perhaps of agriculture—as it is from that of social welfare.

It is now understood by thoughtful reformers that as soon as this crude anomaly of our system has been remedied great "development" measures will be possible that will increase immensely the prosperity of every country, specially perhaps that of agriculture, which is of such fundamental importance. It can hardly be denied by anyone who has seriously studied the subject that Europe might save itself entirely from the evil condition in which it is now, by constructive land reform alone.

The Engineer has shown us how the conditions of the present day, that is to say travelling by public conveyances, demand the lineal development of towns of which India gives no many examples rather than a circular.

They demand the concentration of traffic along certain lines, where there will then be rapid succession of trains and cheap fares. Such a plan would also enable us to have roads for

fast and slow traffic, which modern methods of road locomotion demand. Quite apart, therefore, from sociological considerations and considerations of safety in war, looking from the point of view of convenience of transport, a suitable plan under modern conditions would be of towns consisting of a business centre and a number of lineal residential suburbs radiating out from it. From every modern point of view, therefore, the same thing exactly is demanded, namely the development of well-planned suburbs. The economist can show also that the financial gain, under a rational land system, that would accrue from rapid development of garden-suburbs, would be so great, that immense enterprise of that kind could be undertaken immediately after the reform was adopted. The result would be to give an enormous amount of employment at once, bringing into existence the conditions under which, as we see from the example of Belgium, unemployment practically does not occur; the conditions also that are the most favourable to the prosperity of agriculture. The sociologist is able to show further that people are so much more healthy, so much more sober, so much more law-abiding under the favourable conditions of the garden-suburb, than they are in the socially unfavourable ones of crowded towns, that the national savings under these headings would represent, capitalised, a sum that would be nothing short of colossal.

Taking the various items together, it can easily be calculated that, given some reasonable measure of land reform, it would be enormously profitable to all industrially advanced countries to develop garden-suburbs to their towns very rapidly indeed. I am able to say myself that I maintained in a correspondence that went on in the *Westminster Gazette* for six weeks that it would absolutely pay to get to work to rebuild our towns. The correspondence was summed up in an article in the *Westminster Review*, and produced in pamphlet form, and circulated without any attempt being made at contradicting the facts.

It can also be shown—and it was a point dealt with in the Calcutta University publication¹—that it is not at all beyond human ingenuity to use the unutilised man-power in every country where there is unemployment, to carry out this change, if we regard it, as we should, as a matter of urgent national importance, justifying special measures.

There can be no doubt, thus, that constructive land reform alone might rapidly transform our entire civilisation and earnest social workers at work pressing on the attention of all patriotic and humane people in Great Britain the fact that there is no need for the British nation, eighty per cent. of which is now urban, to continue to live under conditions that produce physical deterioration, and under which they might be slaughtered almost in a night in the event of war; under which also British agriculture cannot prosper, and under which the workers are being demoralised by free maintenance.

They are urging also that, from the moment a simple constructive measure of land reform had been adopted, which nobody would have any reason to oppose, and that no one but a monster of selfishness would oppose, even if he had a reason important steps could be taken at once to relieve unemployment and a great deal of poverty.

Times are ripe, and more than ripe for the sociological change that will give our industrial system the chance of working rationally and of giving humane results, instead of irrationally, and giving inhumane ones. Light is needed on this subject, in connection with which there are such extraordinary prejudices to be overcome, that the simple truth seems hardly able to penetrate.

India is the critic of our modern civilisation, not its blind apologist. Let her now be a fair and intelligent critic, pointing out correctly and scientifically why it has failed, and

¹ "Man and Machine Power in War and Reconstruction," Calcutta University, Rs. 1-8-0.

why she fears Western civilisation under present conditions, and she will give the most valuable help to those who are working for reform.

The whole question is of the very deepest human interest from any point of view, and in these days of political activity, it ought to be correctly understood by all, as an object lesson to every student of politics and sociology.

But the profoundly interesting fact is that India if she would carry out constructively her plan of emancipation might give a lead of the very greatest importance in the direction of establishing the co-operative organisation of the young, the modern *gurukula* which, all agree, would be the most powerful possible lever to move things with.

As "Capital" the leading financial paper of the East said writing of what Calcutta University had done in this respect, never perhaps has any university taken such steps to make known the facts in connection with a plan to solve social problems, and now it behoves all educated people in India to take the matter up.

A strong committee has been formed to take practical steps, of which Sir Asutosh Mookerjee is President. Maharajah of Kasimbazar who financed the preliminary experiment in this direction Colonel Sidney, M.L.A., and Calcutta's leading financier and Rajah Reshee Case Law and Sir Asutosh Chowdhury are the Vice-Presidents.

J. W. PETAVEL

**END OF
TITLE**